

AT&T's customer satisfaction rating places the wireless giant dead last among major carriers, and at its lowest point since shortly before the launch of the original iPhone in 2007, according to a survey.

In terms of making customers happy, [Verizon](#) and Sprint tied for the top spot among the most popular U.S. carriers in the report from the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

T-Mobile, which AT&T is in the process of buying, came in third, falling to a five-year low in the ASCI's survey.

Verizon has been the nation's [leader](#) in customer satisfaction for the last six years, but a dip of 1 percent in its ASCI score left it even with Sprint for the first time.

Sprint has been on an upward trend, "rising 3 percent following consecutive double-digit gains," the indexing group said.

"In just three years, Sprint has emerged from 15 points below even the second worst in the category to claim a share of the industry lead," the ASCI said.

AT&T's survey score fell 4 percent this year, "its worst score since 2006 — the year before the launch of the iPhone," ASCI said.

With AT&T moving to buy T-Mobile — a move that rival Sprint and a number of U.S. senators aren't keen to see happen — it's unclear how the combined companies would do in terms of customer satisfaction, said Claes Fornell, who founded the ACSI survey and is a professor at the University of Michigan.

"It is common to find a reduction in customer satisfaction after mergers, but it is rare for customer satisfaction to drop ahead of a merger," Fornell said in a statement.

"Assuming the deal is approved, it remains to be seen if a much larger AT&T can regain the strength of its customer relationships."